

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-31. (canceled)

32. (new) A process for carrying out and managing a videoconference among a plurality of user locations, the process comprising the steps of:

linking a direction room to a plurality of user locations from which audiovisual signals originate;

converting the audiovisual signals from their respective signal formats to at least one transmission signal format before transmission of the audiovisual signals to the direction room and then transmitting the audiovisual signals from the user locations to the direction room using the at least one transmission signal format;

prior to using the audiovisual signals at the direction room, converting all of the received audiovisual signals into a common audio video format;

at the direction room, selecting the audiovisual signals in the common audio video format to send to the user locations employing an input audio video matrix;

adding further information in the common audio video format to the selected audiovisual signals to form complete outgoing signals in the common audio video format; and

converting the complete outgoing signals from the common audio video format to the at least one transmission signal format before transmission of the complete outgoing signals to the user locations and then transmitting the complete outgoing signals from the direction room to the user locations using the at least one transmission signal format.

33. (new) The process of claim 32, wherein the further information comprises at least one of audio effects, video effects, a title, a soundtrack, a comment, an image, and a graph.

34. (new) The process of claim 32, wherein the selecting step selects a first complete outgoing signal to a speaker at a videoconference and selects a second complete outgoing signal different from the first complete outgoing signal for videoconference attendees other than the speaker.

35. (new) The process of claim 34, wherein the speaker receives an overview of the attendees by employment of a selection device that selects one or more signals from among the user locations and routes the selected signals through the input audio video matrix for delivery to the speaker.

36. (new) The process of claim 34, wherein the speaker is receives a graph and the attendees receive the graph and an image of the speaker.

37. (new) The process of claim 32, wherein speech from a speaker is translated after the adding step and before the converting step and the translated speech is put in the common audio video format and added to the outgoing signal.

38. (new) The process of claim 32, further comprising the step of recording the complete outgoing signal for an archive.

39. (new) An apparatus for carrying out and managing a videoconference among a plurality of user locations, comprising:

means for linking a direction room to a plurality of user locations from which audiovisual signals originate;

first means for converting the audiovisual signals from their respective signal formats to at least one transmission signal format before transmission of the audiovisual signals to the direction room and then transmitting the audiovisual signals from the user locations to the direction room using the at least one transmission signal format;

second means for converting all of the received audiovisual signals into a common audio video format prior to using the audiovisual signals at the direction room;

means, at the direction room, for selecting the audiovisual signals in the common audio video format to send to the user locations employing an input audio video matrix;

means for adding further information in the common audio video format to the selected audiovisual signals to form complete outgoing signals in the common audio video format; and

third means for converting the complete outgoing signals from the common audio video format to the at least one transmission signal format before transmission of the complete outgoing signals to the user locations and then transmitting the complete outgoing signals from the direction room to the user locations using the at least one transmission signal format.

40. (new) The apparatus of claim 39, characterized by the fact that said first means for converting comprises analog/digital audiovisual signal conversion devices.

41. (new) The apparatus of claim 39, wherein said means for adding comprises a mixer.

42. (new) The apparatus of claim 41, wherein said mixer adds at least one of titles, subtitles, a soundtrack, audio video fadings, slides and graphs.

43. (new) The apparatus of claim 41, wherein said mixer adds a name of a speaker at a videoconference.

44. (new) The apparatus of claim 41, wherein said means for selecting comprises a second audio video matrix that receives an input from said mixer.

45. (new) The apparatus of claim 39, further comprising a translation facility that translates speech in a signal from the user locations and adds a translation of the speech to the outgoing signal in the common audio video format.

46. (new) The apparatus of claim 45, wherein said translation facility associates the translated speech to a video signal in real time, in such a way that the translated speech is available to all the user locations that make an explicit request for the translated speech.

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47. (new) The apparatus of claim 39, further comprising a recorder that records the videoconference.

48. (new) The apparatus of claim 39, further comprising an intercom system for the user locations who are not interested in following the videoconference.